

not alive and did not participate in World War II but what I do understand, having dealt with people from around the world and especially in Asia, that this is exactly the kind of a bill that Japan, for their own sake, needs to make sure is paid.

The people of Japan are very interested in face. They are also a people who never fail to pay a just debt. This is a just debt. When people work in any capacity, they need to be paid. No Japanese employer, not Mitsubishi, not any of the heavy industry companies that we are talking about here today, not one of them would fail to pay a worker for a day's work. This is the only time in which these companies have gotten labor for which they have not yet paid.

I absolutely support the legislation of the gentleman. I commend him for something that has been long overdue for bringing it to the forefront. I am pleased to be one of the cosponsors; and I look forward to pushing this through the Congress to, in fact, remind the Japanese people that this is the only way they will put the war behind them is to pay the debts that they know they owe, have the corporations pay what they need to pay, with interest, and move on. That is what we do in a civilized society.

Japan is now one of the great nations of the civilized world, and we need them to free themselves of the burden of this past debt. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to thank the gentleman once again for authoring this bill with the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA). And I look forward to seeing it on the floor and enacted.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), I might add, is one of the great entrepreneurs as well as patriots here in the Congress. I would like to ask him a question. I have no corporate background myself, but I made several times the point that corporations do have responsibility for their actions. Even though it happened a while ago, a corporation would still have legal responsibility for the actions in the past?

Mr. ISSA. Here in America, we have unlimited and permanent liability. There are cases on the American books where a lathe maker who made products in the 1930s had to pay for damages caused to a worker in the 1980s. That is not always considered fair, but corporations understand that one of the advantages they get for that pride of having a plaque that says 50 years or even 100 years in business is in fact that they have to have paid off all of their debts, including the ones that have not yet arisen.

That kind of obligation is understood here in America and very much understood in Japan. As a matter of fact, it is probably more understood in Japan.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, let me also note, and it is important for us to make this point because not only are we talking today to the Japa-

nese people and to the American people, we are talking about our relations between our countries and I do not want anyone to think that the American people or even this American thinks less of the Japanese people and that this is in some way anti-Japanese. The co-author of this bill, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), is one of two Japanese Americans who is a Member of Congress. The gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), during the Second World War, his family was interned during the Second World War here in the United States. The gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is certainly not anti-Japanese whatsoever, and I do not consider myself anti-Japanese at all.

I, in fact, lived in Japan when I was a younger person, and I visited Japan on numerous occasions. My family has many Japanese friends. This in no way is an attack on the Japanese people of today. What we are suggesting in H.R. 1198 is that there is a debt to be paid. Japanese corporations, as the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) has just stated, have a legal debt to pay and our State Department and our government should not be thwarting these heroic Americans in trying to go to court and receive justice that they deserve for being treated like they were by Japanese corporations during the Second World War.

However, the Japanese people themselves did not commit these crimes today. The Japanese people of today did not commit these crimes, and I do not believe that they personally should be held responsible at all. In fact, as I say, over the last 20 years, Japan has worked with the United States to promote democracy. Japan has had a democratic system. We have a relatively free press, and we have had a situation of freedom of religion, et cetera. And Japan has played a very positive role in this world; but during the Second World War and in the beginning decades of this century, that was not the case.

Now, many people probably wonder why I got involved in this in the first place. If I do not have a grudge to bear against the Japanese people, which I do not, and I acknowledge they are wonderful people and it is a wonderful country, I acknowledge that today and I have many Japanese friends, why am I doing this?

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Why am I the author of H.R. 1198? Well, I can tell you, it is a very easy answer, but it requires a little story. I was married about 3½ years ago to the love of my life, Rhonda Carmony, who is now Rhonda Rohrabacher. Rhonda's father, my wife's father, passed away about 5 years ago of cancer, and at our wedding someone else had to give her away because her father had passed away.

You might say the grand old man of Rhonda's family is a man named Uncle Lou. Now, Uncle Lou is a survivor of

the Bataan Death March, who was taken by the Japanese to Manchuria and worked and lived in a slave labor camp, in a concentration camp in Manchuria, until the closing days of the war when he was liberated, and Uncle Lou told me the stories, and I met with Uncle Lou's friends who told me the stories of their ordeal.

These men, who are probably some of the most heroic people I have ever met, told me of the conditions they were kept in, and then they told me that they were unable to sue these Japanese corporations who had used them as slave labor, and they were unable to find justice through the legal system because our own State Department was thwarting them.

My goal is not to humiliate the Japanese or to make the Japanese feel bad, even though in the past they did bad things. The Japanese people did bad things in the distant past, and that was another generation. My goal is to do justice for Uncle Lou and those 5,400 American heroes who survived the Bataan Death March. That is what our goal is.

Before they pass away, let us give them justice. We need to pass H.R. 1198. We need to pass H.R. 1198. It needs to come to the floor for a vote, and we need to do justice by these men and give them a thank you, a thank you for what they did for our country.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that would help Japanese-American relations more than to close this chapter in an honest and honorable way. Nothing would be better for Japanese-American relations than for us to pass H.R. 1198 and to have these Japanese corporations then seek to find a settlement with our American POWs and just close the chapter. Let us finish this. Let us end it in an honorable way before these men die.

I would ask my colleagues to join me in requesting our leadership to bring H.R. 1198 to the floor. I would hope that people would talk to their Members of Congress and get them to support my bill, Congressman DANA ROHRBACHER's bill, H.R. 1198.

Now, when we talk about Japan and we talk about how we reacted and how we react today and are we going to do what is right, those same decisions, we are right now trying to close this chapter, but let us learn from this chapter in history. We need to learn from this chapter in history because some other things are going on in this town that go right back to the lessons that we should have learned by the sacrifices of these men in the Bataan Death March and our soldiers who gave their lives, the men and women who gave their lives and put their lives on the line during World War II.

You see, Uncle Lou was captured in the Bataan Death March, but my own father, who passed away 3 years ago, my father was part of the Marine military. He was a pilot during the Second World War who took part in the liberation of the Philippines. So my father